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United States Department  
of Agriculture  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20250

# News Releases and other News Material

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, Office Of Communications, Room 556-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5881.

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## Statement-

by  
**SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE MIKE ESPY ON AGRICULTURE  
PAYMENTS FOR THE URUGUAY ROUND**

June 28, 1994

"Today's announcement by Office of Management and Budget Director Leon Panetta stating the Clinton Administration would not seek additional farm program cuts to help pay for GATT implementation, demonstrates once again, that this Administration is deeply committed to the American farmer and U.S. agriculture.

"Agriculture gains under the Uruguay Round will contribute significantly to offsetting the cost of reduced tariffs due to the trade agreement. Under the agreement, agricultural outlays are expected to fall by \$1.7 billion over FY 1995-99. Reduction in export subsidies will contribute an estimated \$1 billion while decreased deficiency payments and other CCC outlays from higher exports will total an additional \$700 million over the period.

"Agriculture is a clear winner in the Uruguay Round. USDA estimates that U.S. agricultural exports could rise by \$1.6 to \$4.7 billion in the year 2000 and by \$4.7 to \$8.7 billion in 2005. Employment generated by exports is expected to increase by as much as 122,000 jobs in 2000, and by as much as 190,000 jobs in 2005. The Uruguay Round is expected to raise net farm sector income by as much as \$1.3 billion in 2000 and by as much as \$2.5 billion in 2005."



## News Releases-

Release No. 0486.94

Gil High (202) 720-8998

Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

### **USDA PROPOSES INCREASE IN AMERICAN EGG BOARD ASSESSMENT RATE**

WASHINGTON, June 28--In response to a request from the American Egg Board, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing an amendment to the Egg Research and Promotion Order that would increase the rate of assessment paid by egg producers to the Board. The new assessment would be 10 cents per 30-dozen case of commercial eggs, up from the current assessment of five cents per case.

Any increase from the current rate must be approved by egg producers voting in a referendum, said Lon Hatamiya, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

A December 1993 amendment to the Egg Research and Consumer Information Act increased the maximum assessment rate from 10 cents to 20 cents per case, Hatamiya said. Egg producers owning 30,000 or fewer laying hens are currently exempt from paying assessments.

A proposal to increase the exemption level to 75,000 hens was published in the Federal Register on March 22, 1994. The final rule will be issued after expiration of the comment period. The new exemption level should be in place before the referendum.

Hatamiya said the American Egg Board submitted a marketing analysis and request for the rate increase. USDA was then required to submit the changes as part of the rulemaking procedure.

Details of the proposed amendments appear as a proposed rule in the June 17 Federal Register. Comments should be sent to Janice L. Lockard, Chief, Standardization Branch, Poultry Division, AMS, USDA, Room 3944-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, on or before Aug. 16. After the comment period ends, a referendum will be held to determine whether producers favor the increase.



Release No. 0488.94  
Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256  
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

## **USDA PROPOSES AMENDMENT TO MEXICAN FRUIT FLY REGULATIONS**

WASHINGTON, June 28--The U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed today to add high-temperature forced-air treatment as an alternative treatment for grapefruit moving from areas in Texas and California that are regulated for Mexican fruit fly.

"This high-temperature forced-air treatment was developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service as an effective treatment against the Mexican fruit fly in grapefruit," said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Regulations to prevent the spread of Mexican fruit fly from infested areas require that regulated articles either be inspected and declared free of the pest or be treated in a prescribed manner that will kill the pest before movement out of these areas.

Currently, regulations provide for cold treatment and methyl bromide fumigation as treatments for grapefruit moving from the regulated areas.

"Adding this high-temperature forced-air treatment would facilitate the interstate movement of grapefruit grown in regulated areas," Lee said.

The Mexican fruit fly is a destructive pest of citrus and other types of fruit. Serious outbreaks can cause severe economic losses in commercial citrus-producing areas.

The proposed rule was published in the June 20 Federal Register.

Written comments will be considered if received on or before July 20. Send an original and three copies of comments to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments must refer to docket number 94-030-1. They may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141 South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday except holidays. Persons wishing to review comments are requested to call ahead (202/690-2817) to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.



Release No. 0489.94  
Cynthia A. Eck (301) 436-5931  
Jerry Redding (202) 720-4026

## **USDA PLANS PUBLIC MEETING ON FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES**

WASHINGTON, June 28--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold a public meeting July 7 at the University of Maryland to gather information on the care and use of farm animals for nonagricultural activities regulated by the Animal Welfare Act.

"The meeting offers an opportunity for the general public, animal scientists and researchers, exhibitors, dealers, commercial animal transporters, and animal protection groups to make recommendations regarding farm animal welfare issues," said Glenn Cherry, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service acting director of animal care.

Recommendations and proposed guidelines from this meeting will be used for further evaluation and review of regulatory issues concerning the care and use of farm animals for nonagricultural activities.

The agenda includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- agricultural exemptions;
- agricultural versus nonagricultural environments;
- farm animal well-being;
- special consideration for major operative procedures.

The meeting will be held from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the University of Maryland University College, The Inn and Conference Center, Room 0105 University Boulevard and Adelphi Road, College Park, Md. 20742. Parking will be available at The Inn and Conference Center for \$.50 per hour or \$4.00 for the entire day.



Persons who wish to speak should register with USDA by submitting their request in writing to Joy DeArce, USDA, APHIS, REAC, Room 568-C Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782, no later than July 1. Participants should limit presentations to 10 minutes in order to allow everyone wishing to speak an opportunity to be heard. People who do not register will be given time to speak after the registered speakers, as time permits. Any person who is unable to attend the meeting or attends but wishes to submit additional comments may send them to Joy DeArce at the same address.

Formal notice announcing the meeting was published in the June 20 Federal Register.



Release No. 0490.94  
Neal Flieger (703) 305-2039  
Johna Pierce (202) 720-1691

### **USDA CALLS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON SCHOOL MEALS INITIATIVE**

WASHINGTON, June 28--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is mounting a broad outreach campaign, using Internet, telephone and mail access, and newspaper advertising as it seeks public comment on its proposed regulations to improve school meals.

"The proposal we published this month in the Federal Register represent sweeping changes since the National School Lunch Program was launched nearly 50 years ago," Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said. "It is essential that we get feedback from the public. We want to make it as easy as possible for people to respond to these proposals."

Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services Ellen Haas said the central purpose of the proposed changes is to ensure that all children have access to healthier meals at school.

To accomplish that, Haas said, USDA has proposed that all school meals meet the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the nation's official nutrition policy. In addition, USDA has proposed replacing the rigid "meal pattern," which dictates how much of each food students must be served, with a more flexible nutrition-based system known as NuMenus.

Haas said the proposals that are detailed in the regulations are based on a year of hearings and consultations.

"We held four regional public hearings over the past year, generating more than 2,400 comments," Haas said. "We followed up with in-depth consultations with representatives from a variety of groups with an interest in the school meal programs and children's health."

"Even after this extensive consultative and participatory process, it's important for successful implementation that we receive a high degree of public input," she said. "We've heard what people think about the overall issues. Now we need to know what they think about how we propose to address the issues."

The public has 90 days -- until Sept. 8 -- to submit comments on the proposed regulations. USDA will publish final regulations following its review of all comments submitted.

The proposed regulations were published in the Federal Register on June 10, pages 30218 through 30251. Copies are available by mail and also via Internet. Local libraries and state departments of education may also have copies available. USDA is distributing an advertisement to newspapers across the country, calling for comment and explaining how readers can get a copy of the proposal.

To obtain a copy by mail, write to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Child Nutrition Division, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA, 22302. For further information, telephone (703) 305-2620.

The entire text of the proposed regulations as well as related materials are now available over the Internet, through Extension Service-USDA gopher and e-mail information servers.

Retrieval instructions follow:

VIA GOPHER

Get to the Extension Service-USDA gopher as follows:

- 1) Telnet to your favorite gopher and choose  
"All other gophers -> USA -> General-> Extension Service"  
or
- 2) Point your gopher client to: esusda.gov

Starting at the Extension Service main menu, make the following selections:

- "USDA and Other Federal Agency Information"
- > "USDA: Agency Information"
- > "Food and Nutrition Service, USDA (FNS) -- School Meals Initiative"

VIA E-MAIL

Send the following one-line, lower-case e-mail message to  
almanac@esusda.gov  
send fns catalog

Comments may be sent via e-mail to: healthykids@esusda.gov.

To be assured of consideration, comments should be postmarked or transmitted by September 8, 1994. If comments are sent electronically, designate "receipt requested" to be notified by e-mail that your message has been received by USDA.



Release No. 0493.94  
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Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

**SECRETARY ESPY ANNOUNCES HISTORIC APPLE SHIPMENTS TO CHINA**

SEATTLE, June 29--Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced today the first shipments of U.S. apples to China, which will result in millions of dollars in new export opportunities for American apple producers.

"When I visited the People's Republic of China last October, we discussed apples as one of our key areas of interest for market access into that country," Espy said. "We're pleased with this agreement, and we hope that since the technical requirements have now been met, we can expand trade in the near future to include apples from other states."

Under the terms of a recent agreement signed by USDA and the People's Republic of China, Red Delicious and Golden Delicious apples from certain growers in Washington state can now be shipped to China.

"Increasing international farm trade is vital to our efforts to boost farm income in America," Espy said. "We are hopeful the Chinese market will eventually open to a wide variety of U.S. fruits and vegetables from all parts of the country, and we are pleased that Chinese consumers will now have access to our high quality apples."

Chinese plant quarantine officials met with officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service last December and established the conditions for the entry of Washington apples into China. The apples must come from designated orchards and be packaged in designated packaging facilities. The facilities must have a certificate of compliance with APHIS-approved procedures for export production. After processing, the apples must be placed in a cold temperature facility prior to shipment.





Release No. 0494.94

Tom Amontree (202) 720-4623

Marlene Phillips (202) 720-2061

**USDA ANNOUNCES 1994/95 EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PACKAGE FOR WHEAT**

WASHINGTON, June 29--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture for International and Commodity Programs Dallas Smith today announced a 24.590-million-metric-ton, multi-country package of initiatives under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program (EEP) to boost sales of U.S. wheat during the 1994/95 international marketing year.

The package of initiatives announced today, includes:

Country or Region	Metric Tons (000)
Africa/Southern Region (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe)	500
Africa/West and Central Region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canary Islands, Congo, Cote d' Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, and Zaire)	2,200
Algeria	1,700
Bahrain/Kuwait	175
Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania)	75
Bangladesh	500
China	3,000
Cyprus	80
Czech Republic & Slovakia	50
Egypt	3,500
Finland	25
FSU (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan)	3,000
Honduras	60
Jordan	600
Lebanon	400
Malta	65
Morocco	1,100
Nicaragua	60
Pakistan	2,300
Philippines	1,900
Poland	200
Romania	200
Slovenia	100
Sri Lanka	550
Trinidad and Tobago	150
Tunisia	1,000
Turkey	300
Yemen	800

Sales of wheat will be made to buyers in all countries announced today through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these markets.

EEP Invitations for each of the countries or regions will be issued in the near future. For more information, call Richard J. Chavez, (202) 720-5540, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



Release No. 0495.94  
Neal Flieger (703) 305-2039  
Johna Pierce (202) 720-1691

## **USDA SEEKS TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM FOR LOW-INCOME KIDS**

SACRAMENTO, June 29--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced an effort to expand awareness of its Summer Food Service Program for children. When the School Lunch Program stops for summer vacation, the lesser known and under-utilized Summer Food Service Program will begin providing free meals to low-income children.

"Good nutrition is a year-around responsibility, and we want to reach the children, to tell them and their parents that there is a summer feeding program available to them," said Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services Ellen Haas, making the kickoff announcement during a tour of an SFSP site at Sacramento's George Sims Community Center. "In addition, we want to recruit more local sponsors so we can offer the program in more communities. We want to ensure access to nutritious food for low-income kids all year long."

Haas said that while nearly 14 million low-income children receive meals free or at a reduced price during the school year, only 2.1 million children receive meals through the summer program.

"We estimate that, at best, we are reaching only one in every four or five children who could benefit from this program," Haas said.

The Department will begin working with states to recruit new sponsors for the program. Each site that serves meals through the SFSP must be under the supervision of a local sponsor. The sponsor ensures that program rules are followed, and handles the administrative details to claim reimbursement for the meals served at the sites.

Haas said sponsors are often local government agencies such as school districts, but private, non-profit organizations such as churches or community action agencies can also sponsor meal sites.

"The Summer Food Service Program can be an extremely effective way to provide meals to low-income children," Haas said. "It is closely targeted to areas where the need is greatest, but it is under-utilized. We need more sponsors in more communities."

"Children must get nutritious, healthful meals if they are to grow into healthy, productive adults," she said.

Haas said she plans to visit a number of SFSP sites this summer, and to talk with community leaders about the importance of making the program available to their low-income children.

"It is up to each community to decide that they want SFSP," she said. "We want to encourage communities to participate in this program."

Inquiries about the Summer Food Service Program can be directed to either headquarters or regional public affairs offices of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service:

Headquarters	Neal Flieger	(703) 305-2039
Northeast Region	Charlie De Julius	(617) 565-6395
Mid-Atlantic Region	Walt Haake	(609) 259-5091
Southeast Region	Mary Collins	(404) 730-2588
Midwest Region	Lawrence Rudmann	(312) 353-1044
Mountain Plains Region	Craig Forman	(303) 844-0312
Southwest Region	Judy Snow	(214) 767-0256
Western Region	Dick Montoya	(415) 705-1311



Release No. 0497.94  
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Maria Bynum (202) 720-5192

### **ESPY CALLS EPA REGULATION A VICTORY FOR FARMERS**

Washington, June 30--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy says the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) reformulated gasoline regulation is a big win for farmers and a step forward for the nation.

The rule requires 30 percent of oxygen added to reformulated gasoline be derived from renewable resources, and fulfills President Clinton's promise to provide a meaningful role for ethanol and other renewable fuels in the reformulated gasoline program. In addition, increasing the U.S. ethanol market could substantially reduce America's dependence on foreign oil.

"This is a major triumph for the farmer and taxpayer with long-term benefits for agriculture, the environment and the consumer," said Espy. "The best way to improve financial conditions for U.S. agriculture is by expanding demand for our products. Increased use of ethanol will generate new market demand for corn and other commodities. This will improve farm prices, farm income and create new jobs in rural areas."

Studies show this new regulation will lessen our dependence on fossil energy and reduce emissions that damage the ozone layer, Espy added.

The EPA rule will increase ethanol demand by 500 million gallons a year. That translates to an additional 200 million bushels of corn every year.

The benefits for farmers will begin with this year's harvest as additional corn is ground to meet new ethanol demand. USDA estimates corn prices could increase 4-8 cents per bushel over the next two years as a result of EPA's rule. These price increases would decrease deficiency payments for feed grains and raise U.S. net farm income.

The rule is also expected to spur new investment in ethanol plants throughout the Midwest. USDA expects ethanol capacity to top 1.7 billion gallons annually by the end of 1996. This expansion will increase economic opportunities in rural America by creating new markets for corn. With continued growth, ethanol production could reach 2 billion gallons annually by the year 2000.



Release No. 0498.94  
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789

### **USDA WILL NOT EXTEND UPLAND COTTON LOANS MATURING JULY 31**

WASHINGTON, June 30--Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), today announced that, based on the requirements of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (as amended), loan extensions will not be available on outstanding CCC nonrecourse upland cotton price support loans that mature on July 31, 1994.

Upland cotton loans mature 10 months from the first day of the month in which the loan is made. Producers may request an 8-month extension; however, the 1949 Act provides that loan extensions are not available when the average price for upland cotton (base quality) in designated spot markets for the preceding month exceeds 130 percent of the average spot price for base quality for the preceding 36 months.

The June 1994 average spot market price for base quality upland cotton was 76.85 cents per pound, which is 130.2 percent of the June 1991 through May 1994 average price.





## **USDA SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE CHIEF PRAISES CONSERVATION EFFORTS**

WASHINGTON, June 30--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service Chief Paul W. Johnson paid tribute today to the nation's farmers for their soil and water conservation efforts.

"This is an appropriate time to acknowledge the progress that many farmers have made in natural resource conservation as well as in agriculture production, Johnson said.

"The progress made in conservation should be celebrated and we should rededicate ourselves to good land stewardship that will provide future generations with truly sustainable soil conservation systems on farmland."

Citing information from SCS's recently released 1993 status review, Johnson summed up conservation activities over the past 10 years:

- About 1.2 million farmers have developed conservation plans on more than 140 million acres of highly erodible cropland.

- Erosion on that land is projected to decrease from 17.5 tons an acre a year to 6 tons an acre when the plans are fully implemented at the end of 1994.

- More than 1 billion tons of soil will be saved annually when conservation plans on highly erodible land are fully implemented.

"Yet for all the progress we've made, the effort cannot stop in 1994," Johnson said. "We're a long way from where we need to be in erosion control and other aspects of natural resource protection. As an example, we must work on and improve the consistency across country and state borders of our planning efforts and the systems we use. We're also concerned that we have conservation systems on the books and in use that do not meet our standards for erosion control.

"But I am optimistic about the future, given the technology available and the growing commitment of farmers and others in our society to the well-being of our land and water."

Johnson also cited progress in many areas of natural resource conservation, beyond the protection of highly erodible cropland. These include:

- increased use of crop residue management;
- improved soil erosion prediction technology;
- improved inventories of natural resource conditions and trends;
- wetlands enhancement and restoration;
- inroads in geographic information systems for conservation;
- use of remote sensing of mountain snowpacks for western water supply forecasts;
- introduction of new plant cultivars for erosion control;
- improved irrigation water management and other water management conservation techniques;
- 35 million acres of the nation's most vulnerable cropland now protected by grass and trees enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program;
- major initiatives in water quality and watershed protection, including demonstration projects and new technology;
- working with rural and urban communities to improve their environment and sustainability;
- increased interagency and private sector partnerships for soil and water conservation;
- floodplain management;
- a movement in natural resource management toward a more ecosystem-based approach;
- increased protection of archaeological and other cultural resources;
- international technology exchanges;
- involvement in global climate change initiatives;
- increased volunteerism;
- participation in AmeriCorps, the new "domestic Peace Corps," to encourage community service through environmental and rural development projects.

Johnson invited those who are not directly involved in natural resource activities and want to be to contact SCS for more information on its volunteer program by calling 1-800-THE-SOIL.

Release No. 0503.94  
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789

### **CCC INTEREST RATE FOR JULY REMAINS 5-1/4 PERCENT**

WASHINGTON, July 1--Commodity loans disbursed in July by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 5-1/4 percent interest rate, according to Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of the CCC.

The 5-1/4 percent rate is the same as for June and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury.



Release No. 0504.94  
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### **FOREST SERVICE TIMBER SALE REPORT SHOWS IMPROVEMENT TOWARD ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY**

WASHINGTON, JULY 1--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today released the Fiscal Year (FY) 1993 Timber Sale Program Information Reporting System (TSPIRS) annual report.

This report highlights the substantial effect that ecosystem management is having on the timber sale program. More sales are being designed to enhance non-timber resources or achieve healthier ecological conditions.

For the first time, the TSPIRS report is available electronically from the National Agricultural Library electronic Bulletin Boards System. To access: Set modem for 9600, N81. Dial NAL at (301) 504-5111, 5496 or 5497. Go to the files (FORESTs) section and download TSPIRS93.ZIP.

TSPIRS is also available from the USDA Extension Service using Internet. Mail your requests to: [almanac@ace.esusda.gov](mailto:almanac@ace.esusda.gov) and in the message block type: send fs-tspirs catalog.

Please direct technical questions or requests for the report to Rick Prausa, Forest Service Analyst, at (202) 205-1762. His internet address is [FSWA/S=R.Prausa/ou1=w01c@mhs.attmail.com](mailto:FSWA/S=R.Prausa/ou1=w01c@mhs.attmail.com).



Release No. 0505.94  
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Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

### **USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON CONTINUATION OF COTTON ASSESSMENTS FOLLOWING HTS RENUMBERING**

WASHINGTON, July 1--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking comments on amending Cotton Board rules and regulations. The amendment would allow assessments on imported cotton and cotton-containing products to continue when the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) numbers identifying these products are changed periodically by the U.S. International Trade Commission.

Lon Hatamiya, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said AMS will update and publish the list of HTS numbers subject to the cotton assessment once each year. He said that until this takes place, cotton assessments will continue on the new HTS numbers assigned to the imported products which were previously identified in the October 7, 1993 Federal Register.

Since implementation of the program in 1992, AMS has found that HTS renumbering occurs for reasons such as statistical reporting, presidential proclamations and most favored nation trading status changes. Currently, when HTS renumbering occurs, assessments on imported products stop until new numbers can be published.

The amendment will:



- minimize revenue loss to the Cotton Research and Promotion Program;
- reduce the need for frequent rulemaking actions to update Cotton Board rules and regulations for adjusting to HTS renumbering and;
- provide importers and U.S. customs officials with a consistent policy pertaining to the cotton assessment requirement.

Cotton assessments will stop on imported cotton and cotton-containing products when HTS classifications undergo actual changes in description, which affect the product's cotton content.

The U.S. Customs Service is responsible for collecting assessments on about 700 HTS classifications for the Cotton Research and Promotion program.

Details of the amendment appeared in today's Federal Register for July 1. Comments must be received by July 30. For more information contact Craig Shackelford, Cotton Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2641-S., P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; tel. (202) 720-2259.



## Program Announcements-

Release No. 0482.94

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### USDA PROPOSES REQUIRING CERTIFICATION FOR ALL IMPORTED MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

WASHINGTON, June 27--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed to require that all milk and milk products imported into the United States be accompanied by certificates stating that the milk was produced and processed in countries declared free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

To prevent the introduction of these diseases, the importation of milk and milk products is restricted unless the exporting countries are considered to be free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease by USDA's criteria. As many trade barriers are being lifted among countries--especially among members of the European Union--it has become increasingly difficult for USDA to ensure that milk and milk products imported into the United States have never been in a country where rinderpest or foot-and-mouth disease exist.

To ensure that milk or milk products being imported into the United States were produced and processed in countries free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease, the proposed rule would require that a certificate accompany all such shipments. This certificate would have to be endorsed by a full-time salaried veterinarian employed by the exporting country. It would state the country in which the milk was produced and the country in which the milk or milk products were processed. The certificate would also have to state that the milk product has never been in any country in which rinderpest or FMD exist.

This proposal would not apply to milk or milk products imported from Canada because Canada shares a common land border with only the United States and imports milk and milk products under the same restrictions as the United States.

FMD is a severe, highly communicable viral disease of cattle and swine that has been eradicated from the United States since 1929. The FMD virus has a remarkable capacity for remaining viable in carcasses and animal products and byproducts. The U.S. livestock population is highly susceptible to FMD since it was eradicated a long time ago and no animals are vaccinated against it. The U.S. cattle population is also highly susceptible to rinderpest, a viral bovine disease that has never occurred in North America.

This proposed rule was published in the June 21 Federal Register. Comments will be considered if received on or before Aug. 22. To submit a written comment, send an original and three copies referring to docket number 93-061-1 to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141 South Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to review comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.



The information collection and recordkeeping requirements of this proposed rule will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for approval. Please send copies of written comments also to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for APHIS, Washington, D.C. 20503; and to Clearance Officer, OIRM, USDA, Room 404-W, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250.

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Release No. 0491.94  
Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734

## USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, June 28--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Dallas Smith today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	8.67 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	11.37 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	11.22 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	4.33 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

	Loan Gain and LDP Rate	Marketing Certificate Rate
	.....\$/Cwt.....	
--for long grain:	\$1.28	\$0.00
--for medium grain:	\$0.00	\$0.00
--for short grain:	\$0.00	\$0.00

The announced prices and rates are effective today at 3:00 P.M. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made July 5, 1994 at 3:00 P.M. EDT.

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Release No. 0496.94  
Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091  
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

## USDA REVISES MOISTURE METER CHARTS

WASHINGTON, June 30--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has revised three conversion charts for the Motomco Model 919 Moisture Meter.

Effective July 1, 1994, the new charts for corn (Chart C-1-94), high-moisture corn (Chart C-2-94), and Long Grain Rough rice (Chart RR-1-94) should be used for all official inspections.

The new corn chart is not a calibration change. Rather, the upper limit of the chart has been extended to intersect with the new high-moisture corn chart. In contrast, the charts for high-moisture corn and Long Grain Rough rice have been completely updated. The revisions improve the accuracy of grain moisture measured in the official inspection system.

The Motomco Moisture Meter is the officially-approved instrument for testing moisture in grains.

Technical contact: Jim Rampton, USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service, Quality Assurance and Research Division, (816) 891-0450.

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**USDA ANNOUNCES 1994 DOMESTIC MARKETING ASSESSMENT RATE FOR TOBACCO**

WASHINGTON, June 30--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that the 1994 domestic marketing assessment is \$0.9139 per pound on the quantity of imported tobacco used in excess of the 25 percent allowable amount to make cigarettes in 1994. This is provided for by Section 320C of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended and implemented by a rule published in the Federal Register on June 1, 1994 (59Fir.28207).

The rate was determined by subtracting the average price per pound of imported tobacco for 1993 (\$1.3732) from one half of the sum of the 1992-93 marketing year average prices received by the producers of burley (\$2.3749) and flue-cured (\$2.1993) tobacco.

The domestic prices for burley and flue-cured tobacco on a farm sales weight basis have been adjusted to convert these prices to a stemmed redried weight basis. The prices are further adjusted to include the processing costs of domestic burley and flue-cured tobacco.

The adjustments make the prices of domestic tobacco comparable to the prices of imported tobacco with respect to weight and value added by processing.



Release No. 0500.94  
Janise Zygmunt (202) 720-6734

**USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON**

WASHINGTON, June 30--Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price or AWP), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (leaf grade 4, micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, July 7. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 1 through midnight Thursday, July 7.

The 6-week transition period from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the AWP calculation is complete. Beginning with today's calculation, forward shipment prices will be used to calculate the NE price and the USNE price.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday-through-Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. Because this week's calculated AWP is equal to 129.6 percent of the 1993 upland cotton base quality loan rate, a further adjustment cannot be made.

Because both current and forward NE coarse count prices are not yet available, the CCA is calculated using the NE current price and the only NE coarse count price available.

This week's AWP and CCA are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price .....	81.57
Adjustments:	
Avg. U.S. spot market location .....	11.91
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton .....	1.50
Avg. U.S. location .....	0.31
Sum of Adjustments .....	- 13.72
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE .....	67.85 cents/lb.



Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price Current Price.....	82.95
NE Coarse Count Price .....	- 81.62
	1.33
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton .....	- 3.20
	- 1.87
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT .....	0 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is above 52.35 cents per pound--the base quality loan rate for both the 1992 and 1993 marketing years--the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the loan rate, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

The USNE current price has not exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks, and not all of the previous four AWP's have been less than 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate. As a result, the current user marketing certificate payment rate is zero. This rate is applicable during the Friday-through-Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1994. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday-through- Thursday Period Ending	Announced AWP As Percent of the 1993 Loan Rate	USNE Price ..... cents/lb .....	NE Price	Current User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate
1	June 9, 1994	135.6	89.45 (c)	86.65 (c)	0
2	June 16, 1994	134.8	88.45 (c)	86.39 (c)	0
3	June 23, 1994	133.7	86.65 (c)	85.57 (c)	0
4	June 30, 1994	129.6	81.25 (c)	82.95 (c)	0

(c) Based on current price quotations.

The forward user marketing certificate payment rate is based on the lower of: a) the difference in the fourth week between the USNE forward price and the NE forward price, minus 1.25 cents, or b) 20 percent of the difference in the fourth week between the USNE forward price and the NE forward price, minus 1.25 cents plus the previous week's rate for which forward shipments were eligible. The USNE forward price has not exceeded the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks, and not all of the previous four AWP's have been less than 130 percent of the 1994 crop year base quality loan rate. As a result, the forward user marketing certificate payment rate is zero. The forward payment rate is applicable during the Friday-through-Thursday period for contracts entered into by exporters for delivery after Sept. 30, 1994. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday-through- Thursday Period Ending	Announced AWP As Percent of the 1994 Loan Rate 1/	USNE Forward Price ..... cents/lb .....	NE Forward Price	Forward User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate
1	June 9, 1994	142.0	84.30 (f)	82.79 (f)	0
2	June 16, 1994	141.2	84.90 (f)	83.27 (f)	0
3	June 23, 1994	140.0	84.15 (f)	82.80 (f)	0
4	June 30, 1994	135.7	81.65 (f)	81.57 (f)	0

(f) Based on forward price quotations.

1/ 1994 Loan Rate is 50.00 cents per pound.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rates will be announced on Thursday, June 30 at 5 p.m.





## Features-

Release No. 0483.94  
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### "GRILL" THE USDA HOTLINE EXPERTS ABOUT SAFE SUMMER COOKING

WASHINGTON, June 27--The lazy, hazy days between Memorial Day and Labor Day mark the time to break out the backyard barbecue grill.

This is also a good time to "grill" the specialists from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline about tips on cooking and handling foods safely to avoid food poisoning.

"Safe food handling is always important," said Susan Conley, director of the nationwide toll-free hotline, "but during the warm summer months--peak grilling season--there is an increased need for awareness of safe food handling practices."

Cases of foodborne illness do rise during the summer. The Hotline offers advice to consumers with questions about safe handling and preparation of meat and poultry products.

Here are some of the most common topics when callers have "grilled" the Hotline experts:

**Marinating.** The Hotline advised to marinate raw meat, fish and poultry in a glass dish in the refrigerator--not on the counter. "If you plan to use some of the marinade as a dip or basting sauce later, set aside a portion before adding raw meat or poultry to it," said Marilyn Johnston, one of the specialists on the Hotline. "Don't re-use the marinade from raw meat unless you boil it for several minutes to destroy any bacteria from the raw meat."

**Pre-cooking.** Many Hotline callers asked about whether it's safe to save time on the grill by partially cooking meat or poultry ahead of time to finish up on the grill. "Yes, it is safe, but only if the food goes immediately from the microwave or range to the grill," said Bessie Berry, senior home economist on the Hotline. "Think of it as all one cooking process, and cook the meat thoroughly all at once." Interrupted cooking is risky business. If you must cook ahead, cook the meat completely and then cool it fast for reheating on the grill later.

**Cooking Thoroughly** For safety and quality, the coals should be very hot before cooking food. It can take 30 minutes or longer before the coals are ready. They should show a light coating of ash for optimal heat.

"Meat and poultry should be thoroughly cooked," said Conley, "and it's best to use a meat thermometer to check for safety and doneness." Large cuts of beef like roasts may be cooked to an internal temperature of 145°F for medium rare and 160°F for medium. Whole poultry should reach 180°F.

"Don't eat raw or undercooked hamburgers made from meat or ground poultry since harmful bacteria could be present," she added. To be sure bacteria are destroyed, cook meat patties to 160°F; ground poultry to 165°F.

"It's always a good idea to take an 'exploratory' cut into any patties, poultry, meat or fish to check doneness," Conley said, "because on the grill, often the outside looks done, but the inside is not. Juices should be clear and meat should not be pink."

**Grilling and Cancer Concerns.** "Worries about overcooking or charring foods brought more concerned callers," said Diane Van, another hotline food safety specialist. "We got a lot of calls from people who are afraid to grill because they have heard consuming grilled foods could be linked to cancer. As long as you're not cooking every breakfast, lunch and dinner on the grill, there shouldn't be a problem. The answer: moderation."

The American Cancer Society suggests trimming visible fat that could make the fire flame up and char the food. Pre-cooking in the microwave and conventional oven also lessens grilling time and reduces risks. The Society also suggests raising the cooking level of the grill so food is farther from the heat, avoid eating charred or burned portions of food and clean the grill thoroughly after cooking.

**Serving Grilled Food.** Serve hot, grilled foods immediately. Put cooked foods on clean plates that weren't used to hold the raw meat or poultry. Perishable foods should be consumed within two hours, one hour if the outside temperature is above 90°F.

**Cleaning Up.** Clean the grill after each use. "Also, refrigerate any leftovers promptly," Conley advised. "Divide larger quantities into small, shallow containers."

**Taking Leftovers Home.** A number of Hotline callers asked about the safety of taking home perishable foods from picnics. Barbara O'Brien, a registered dietitian on "the line" suggested, "If you are returning home from an outing within four to five hours, and your perishables were on ice except when cooked and served, you should be able to save the leftovers. Be sure the foods are refrigerator cold to the touch and ice or a cold source remains when you arrive home."

For more information about grilling or other questions about safe handling of foods, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. In the Washington, D.C. area, call (202) 720-3333. Both numbers are TDD accessible.



Release No. 0484.94

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## **USDA'S HOTLINE PRESENTS THE "TOP 10 REASONS TO HANDLE YOUR FOOD SAFELY"**

WASHINGTON, June 27--On July 1 the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline begins its tenth year as a toll-free public service. Consumers with food safety questions may call the hotline with questions on the safe handling of meat and poultry products.

In honor of the occasion, the Hotline presents its "Top 10 Reasons to Handle Your Food Safely."

**NUMBER 10:** Safe food handling practices are the ones most likely to preserve food's peak quality. Keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold inhibits growth of the microorganisms that can spoil your food or make you ill. Storage at the proper temperature also retains the fresh appearance, pleasant aroma and agreeable texture that contribute so strongly to an enjoyable dining experience.

**NUMBER 9:** Safe food handling lets you enjoy to the fullest the nutritional benefits of food. If you've taken the time to carefully select a variety of healthful foods, why not use them up--or properly preserve them for long-term storage--while nutrient levels are at their peak? Foods that must be discarded due to decay or temperature abuse nourish no one.

**NUMBER 8:** The safest ways to handle food are usually the most efficient. Don't take chances in the name of saving time. Thawing meat and poultry products at room temperature and partial cooking are examples of practices which can seem like good ideas, but that may actually encourage bacterial growth by keeping food in the "danger zone" (40°-140° F.) where bacteria multiply fastest. In the case of bacteria that produce heat-resistant toxins, this becomes a problem that further cooking can't fix.

**NUMBER 7:** Safe food handling is easy. You set a good example for others, including your children. You are the last person to handle your food before it is eaten. You may be the last person to handle food before it is served to your family or friends. Take charge. Prevention of illness may be as simple as washing your hands--an often-neglected but very important act.

**NUMBER 6:** Safe food handling inspires confidence and keeps peace in the family. Imagine: No more family feuds because someone handled dinner in a questionable fashion. And family and friends won't call the Meat and Poultry Hotline begging to have food safety literature mailed to your address!

**NUMBER 5:** Safe food handling can enhance your standing in the community. Food for a concession stand, bake sale or church supper must be carefully prepared. Many of those in your community are very young, elderly, or suffering from health problems that affect the immune system. They are at increased risk for foodborne illness. Protect their health and the reputation of your organization.

**NUMBER 4:** Safe food handling is the responsible thing to do. Those for whom you prepare food deserve the best, and you expect no less from those who produce and prepare food for you. You are no less important than the manufacturer, government regulator, or grocer in assuring food safety. You are an important link in the farm-to-table chain.

**NUMBER 3:** Safe food handling saves money. Foodborne illness costs billions each year in health care costs and lost wages. It's hard to throw away food you know has been mishandled. But compare the cost of the food to the cost of a bad case of food poisoning, starting with the doctor's bill.

**NUMBER 2:** By handling food safely, you will spare yourself and your family from a painful bout of illness. Bacterial, parasitic or viral illness caused by food is no fun, and it can have long-term consequences.



Should we fear food? No. Microscopic organisms have always been and will always be an important part of our world. But we must store foods properly, cook them thoroughly and keep our hands and work areas clean. Sometimes, what you can't see can hurt you.

Which brings us to the...

**NUMBER 1 REASON TO HANDLE YOUR FOOD SAFELY:** It may save a life.

Safe food handling really does make a difference. Where do you start? Learn more. USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline can answer your food safety questions. Just call 1-800-535-4555, or (202) 720-3333 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Both numbers are TDD accessible.



Release No. 0502.94  
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### **USDA'S MEAT AND POULTRY HOTLINE BEGINS 10TH YEAR OF TOLL-FREE SERVICE**

WASHINGTON, July 1--As the U.S. Department of Agriculture's nationwide, toll-free Meat and Poultry Hotline begins its tenth year of operation, director Susan Conley reflected on what has changed and what hasn't.

"The service is now toll-free and the calls have quintupled," said Conley, "but the Hotline remains a convenient, friendly way for people with questions or problems related to meat and poultry products to reach a helping hand. And, the Hotline still helps USDA monitor consumer concerns and identify areas in which further education is needed."

In the mid-1980s, after answering food safety phone calls for several years, the public information staff of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service sensed that many more consumers would ask questions if they didn't have to pay for a long distance call. So FSIS piloted a toll-free 800 number in three states. The effort was so successful that the 800 number was made available nationwide.

The home economist who answered the Meat and Poultry Hotline's first call on July 1, 1985, recalled it vividly. "The caller's son was serving on a military aircraft carrier in the Indian Ocean. She wanted to know if she could mail his favorite sausage to him. As it turned out, that type of sausage required refrigeration to prevent bacterial growth.

We advised her to select a less perishable, more shelf-stable sausage to send to her son."

Conley was that home economist. She stayed with the Hotline through its days as a fledgling one-room operation and today directs the activities of fifteen full- and part-time employees (home economists, registered dietitians, food technologists) involved in all types of food safety education.

"We've seen a remarkable growth in the number of calls, from about 29,000 in its first full year to more than 130,000 in 1992 and 1993," said Conley. We've also witnessed an evolution in awareness of specific bacteria and foodborne illnesses, as people become more interested in nutrition, health, and food safety.

However, the types of questions that were most common in our early days are still the most common today."

Approximately 71 percent of the inquiries handled by staff food safety specialists over the years have dealt with basic food safety issues, and that percentage varies little from year to year. Some of the often-asked questions concern food storage times, safe methods of handling and preparing meat and poultry products, prevention of foodborne illness and everyday problems like what to do after the electricity goes off or the refrigerator conks out.

At first, most of the Hotline's users were consumers, and the same is true today. However, the Meat and Poultry Hotline has become an important resource for business and professional people, government officials, students and teachers, the media and others with an interest in food safety.

"The Meat and Poultry Hotline looks forward to its second decade in support of the USDA/FSIS mission to ensure that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome and accurately labeled," said Conley.

For more information, call 1-800-535-4555. In the Washington, D.C. area, call (202) 720-3333. Both numbers are TDD accessible.







